

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the specification based on the presence of blanks. As to the objection regarding page 5, line 13, the missing information was supplied in the amendment filed July 14, 2005. As to the remaining objection, the specification has been amended to delete the area objected to by the Examiner. It is thus believed that the objection to the specification can be withdrawn.

Claims 13-17 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter that is not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey that the inventors had possession of the claimed invention at the time the application was filed. In response, the language of claim 13 has been amended so that claim 13 presents the invention in the same terms as used in the specification and in the other independent claims. It is thus believed that the rejection under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, can be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 9-13, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Huot, Jr. et al U.S. Patent 6,206,189. Claims 4, 8 and 14-17 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Huot, Jr. et al in view of Zakarian U.S. Patent 5,803,253. Claims 5-7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, with an indication that such claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this response, claim 5 is amended to independent form, incorporating the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of the Examiner's indication, claim 5 is believed to be in allowable form along with dependent claims 6 and 7.

The remaining claims have been amended in a manner believed to patentably define over the references.

The present invention provides a unique product packaging arrangement in which the entirety of the product, between the upper and lower ends of the product, is

exposed forwardly of the package and is suspended from lower product support structure associated with the package. This construction enables the potential purchaser to fully view the product and to manipulate the product prior to purchase. Information about the product is displayed on a panel or wall located above the product. The package is supported in a suspension-type manner from upper suspension-type engagement structure. The upper engagement structure is offset forwardly relative to the lower product support structure, and is located above the product to maintain the product and the package in an upright position when suspended from the upper engagement structure.

The Huot, Jr. et al reference discloses a container for drill bits 20 contained within a bit panel 14. The bit panel 14 and bits 20 are located within the interior of the container. The container includes a housing 12 having a top portion 24 and a bottom portion 22 interconnected by a hinge, to provide an internal cavity within which the bits 20 and bit panel 14 are received. A hanger tab 38 extends upwardly from the bottom portion 22 for use in display or to retain the housing on a peg board in a workshop.

The claims have been amended to emphasize the distinctions of the present invention over the prior art.

Claim 1 is amended to state that the product has an upper end and a lower end. The product is defined as being fixed to the lower support section toward the upper end of the product and as being suspended from the lower product support section in a forwardly facing orientation. Claim 1 is also amended to state that the product and the lower product support section are configured such that the product is located forwardly of the lower product support section and is fully exposed between the upper and lower ends of the product, to enable a potential purchaser to manipulate the product while the product is fixed to the lower product support section. Claim 1 is also amended to state that the upper engagement section is offset in a forward direction relative to the lower product support section and is located above the product, to maintain the packaging and display arrangement in a generally upright position when supported from the upper engagement section.

The subject matter of amended claim 1 is not shown or suggested by the Huot, Jr. et al reference. In Huot, Jr. et al, the tool bits are not fully exposed, but rather are contained within the interior of the housing and are only accessible when the top portion of the housing is opened. Furthermore, when the top portion of the housing is opened, the product contained within the interior of the housing, i.e. the tool bits and bit panel, can be pivoted outwardly so that the tool bits can be removed. This is in distinct contrast to the invention as defined in amended claim 1, which states that the product is fully exposed between the upper and lower ends of the product while the product is fixed to the lower product support section. In Huot, Jr. et al, the “product”, i.e. the drill bits, is not fixed to the packaging arrangement but rather can be removed when the top portion of the housing is opened. Furthermore, when the top portion of the housing is opened, the bit panel can be pivoted outwardly, so that the upper engagement section is not located above the product, as claimed.

For the above reasons, amended claim 1 is believed to patentably define over the Huot, Jr. et al reference, and is allowable.

Claims 2-4 and 8-12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, and are believed allowable for the above reasons as well as in view of the subject matter of each claim.

Claim 13 is amended to state that the outwardly facing wall, which defines an upper area and a lower area, also defines a pair of spaced apart side edges extending between the upper area and the lower area. Claim 13 further calls for an upper suspension-type engagement structure interconnected with the upper area of the outwardly facing wall, and offset in a forward direction relative to the lower area of the outwardly facing wall. Claim 13 also calls for a lower product support structure interconnected with the lower area of the outwardly facing wall. The product is defined as being engaged with the lower product support structure in a manner such that the product is located forwardly of the outwardly facing wall. The outwardly facing wall between the upper engagement structure and the lower product support structure is

exposed in a forward direction. Claim 13 further states that the product support structure is configured so as to position the product such that a center of gravity defined by the product is located below the upper engagement structure so that product and the package are suspended in a generally upright orientation. Finally, claim 13 is amended to state that the side edges of the outwardly facing wall, located between the upper engagement structure and the lower product support structure, define the overall width of the package.

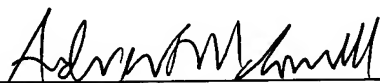
The invention as defined in amended claim 13 is in direct contrast to that of the Huot, Jr. et al reference. In Huot, Jr. et al, the tab 38 is significantly narrower than the overall width of the housing, within which the product is contained. Accordingly, claim 13 is believed to patentably define over Huot, Jr. et al, and is allowable. Claims 14-17 depend directly or indirectly from claim 13, and are believed allowable for the above reasons as well as in view of the subject matter of each claim.

Claim 23 is amended along the same lines as amended claim 1. For the reasons noted above with respect to claim 1, it is believed claim 23 also patentably defines over the references, and is allowable.

Applicant's attorney has made every effort to place the application into condition for allowance with claims 1-17 and 23, and such action is earnestly requested.

The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by phone if questions remain after consideration of this response, or if such would otherwise facilitate prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

By   
Andrew S. McConnell  
Reg. No. 32,272

Boyle, Fredrickson, Newholm,  
Stein & Gratz, S.C.  
250 East Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1030  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 225-9755  
Customer No.: 23598